

Hayes, William J.

1917

[Buenaventura, Colombia]

The Anglo-Colombian Development Company, Limited.

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Rep. de Colombia. A. M. N. H.

Andagoya,
Buenaventura,
Colombia,
So. America.

American Museum of Natural History;

Dear Sirs:-

Inclose please find sketch of a coin I obtained from a native miner in Quibdo, Colombia during the fall of 1915.

During the period when the Spaniards held possession of Colombia there was considerable mining. Among the washings was a metal unknown to the Spaniards which is known now-a-days as platinum. After separating the gold, using the dry or "blowing" method, this metal was either cast into the streets or thrown through the cracks in the floors of their buildings.

A considerable quantity of this metal was discovered in Quibdo, which is the capital of the Choco district; the result being that the entire town of some 1500 inhabitants was turned into a mine; natives working the streets for the government and property owners mining under their houses. One man to my knowledge tore down his store and recovered enough platinum to rebuild on a larger scale and clear \$4000 American gold.

Am some what interested in the coins unusual (at least to me) design and if you could inform me something concerning it would be very thankful.

If it happens to be of any value I will gladly give it to the museum.

Kindly advise me concerning the above and oblige,

Very Truly Yours,

Wm J. Hayes.

March 17, 1917.

Mr. William J. Hayes,

Andagoya,
Buenaventura,
Colombia,
So, America.

Dear Sir:-

Your letter to the American Museum of Natural History has been turned over to us as we attend to and care for, all the coins of several of the Museums in New York.

We are very much interested in what you say concerning platinum and we can state this,- that at sometime during the 18th century, the Spaniards realized the possibilities of platinum on account of its weight and individuals made counterfeits of the gold coins in platinum, gold-plated them and past them off for gold. This they could do at a good profit as platinum, as you well no, had no known use.

We note that you desire to present the coin you send a drawing of to the Museum and we would be very much pleased to accept this as well as any others that you may care to give, both modern and old. Our collection of modern coins is of course, fairly extensive, but we do not claim to have everything and if at any time you pick up any coin you think might be a little scarce and not liable to find its way to this country, we would be pleased to have you communicate with us.

We beg to remain,

Very sincerely yours,